5: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937)1938 FE11 Tallensi FE1

867 857 somnolent, sat whimpering as he ate, while some one else commented that if you want your share of food you must be there to receive it.

183 764 The principle of reciprocity which is thus early learnt in association with siblings and age mates is one of the basic moral axioms of Tale social life. If a man refuses to come to the assistance of a neighbour who has invited a collective hoeing party, the latter will retaliate by refusing assistance to the former at a later date. Often at mortuary ceremonies some one, not obliged by custom to do so, will bring an animal to be slaughtered for the dead, 'because when my father died, he brought a sheep to be killed'. A girl of about 10, after her grandmother's funeral, showed me how half her head had been shaved in the customary way. But her spontaneous explanation was: 'Because, at the feast, when they cook the beans they give me a whole dish to myself.' This moral aspect of Tale social relations, as we can now see, explains the rights which increasing economic skill confer upon a boy or a girl. Those who work for you *deserve* their keep.[1]

[854 855] [1] I have not attempted to track the Tale attitudes towards authority and justice to their roots in infant psychology, as would be necessary for an exhaustive analysis. Some of the phenomena which should be observed in this connexion are not accessible to study by the behaviouristic methods of the field worker. But it may be worth mentioning that one can readily observe the constraint and force which, at some times, the affection and indulgence which, at others, are expressed in the way parents treat their infant children. From the day of its birth an infant is subjected to the agonizing ordeal of a daily bath in steaming medicated water which is so hot that it becomes rigid with pain on the first douche. One sees infants of a few days to about 12 months old arbitrarily held down on their mother's laps while medicated drinking water is forcibly poured down their throats as they struggle and splutter. A few minutes after an infant has been treated thus roughly [966] it will be lovingly suckled, fondled, and caressed by mother or sister, or affectionately dandled by its father. A 3-year-old suddenly frightened runs to its father, or more characteristically to its mother to bury its face between her knees, clutching her thighs, or to snatch at the breast. The same 3-year-old, in a fit of temper, will nag, whimper petulantly, strike its mother with its little fists. No one beats an infant for this. The mother tries to soothe it, or patiently calls some one—husband or co-wife—to come and take charge of the unruly child. This indulgence extends [839] to the excretory processes, and to masturbation, which is overt until puberty in boys. Until it is weaned, at about 3—when it can walk—it has very complete possession of its mother. After weaning, which is generally mild, the child becomes more detached from its mother, who now resumes regular intercourse with her husband. At this age, or even younger, children are often playfully threatened by their fathers. 'I will slaughter you if you do so and so', but they always seem to react with complete equanimity to this. Yet a boy of 4–5 years, suspiciously